



Welcome to The RRMA On Track Newsletter

All aboard! The first issue of the RRMA On Track newsletter has arrived. Welcome onboard the Regina Railway Modellers Association.

We're a new group that's dedicated to promoting model railroading in any scale as a fun, family hobby.

We're also modellers who are planning to design and build an HO scale modular layout based on Regina area rail operations of the Canadian Pacific, CN and Stewart Southern Railway.

This newsletter will keep you up-to-date on the RRMA and offer you what we hope will be useful information on model railroading in general.

So climb onboard the RRMA and let's go for our first journey along the tracks. ◀◀



↑ What every prairie layout needs!

Meet the RRMA Executive

One of the first orders of business was to elect the first Executive for the RRMA. The charter members elected three officers - President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Tom Mulligan, President

Tom is a long-time railway modeller and collector. After raising five daughters and a long career in financial services, Tom is quickly getting his model railroad ambitions on track.

Tom has done the lion's share of the design and construction work on our first group of modules with four corner sections to follow this spring. He has a keen hand with tools and is well-equipped for the job.

Corie Knutt, Secretary

Corie brings a passion for well-designed and engineered models., Including trains, trucks and large cranes. Through his career, he has developed an impressive set of building skills specializing in fine detail work and painting.

Corie has a great eye for detail while still watching the big picture and his work is very impressive.

David Onodera, Treasurer

David has owned model trains since his first Marx train set purchased for him when he was four years old. Now semi-retired after a long career in transportation, David is ready to get on track as well.

One of David's passions is kitbashing and scratch building structures and scenery, particularly urban street scenes. He is also into chasing and photographing real trains and is building his knowledge about railway operations.

Now you know a little bit about the three inaugural Executive members of the RRMA. How about joining us in person so we can find out about you! ◀◀



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ON TRACK is produced by the Regina Railway Modellers Association. David Onodera, Editor.

Coming up in future issues of ON TRACK:

- Have a look at how we've been building our first modules
- DCC or not to DCC?
- More information about real railways and the equipment they operate

Do you have something you'd like to see or know more about? Send us an e-mail to the address on the last page. We'd be happy to try and provide you with some information. ◀◀



A Simple Primer on Model Scales

There are several scales that you can model when working with model trains. This article is a very simple primer on the differences between the most common model railway scales.

In model railway terms, scale means the ratio between a unit of measurement on a model compared with a unit on measurement of a real life object.

For example, the photos illustrate a General Electric model ES44AC locomotive operated by Canadian Pacific.

from locomotives, rolling stock and track, to buildings. You can even purchase scale people, dogs, cats, cows and sheep! Then there are a wide range of detailing parts and scratch building supplies - but that's a story for another day.

HO scale is also popular because it provides a good balance between having a good sized operating layout with cars and buildings that are large enough for most of us to handle, even at a slightly older age, as some of us are!



↑ G scale (approx. 1:22.5)



← O scale (1:48 U.S.A.)



← HO scale (1:87)



← N scale (1:160)



← Z scale (1:220)

The real locomotive measures 73 feet, 2 inches (22.30 metres) in length.

In G scale (garden railways), using a 1:22.5 scale, an ES44AC model would be about 3 feet, 4 inches long.

In American O scale the same locomotive would be about 1 foot, 6 inches long.

An HO scale version would measure just over 10 inches long.

The N scale ES44AC would be just under 5.5 inches long.

The tiny Z scale ES44AC would be only about 4 inches long!

HO scale is by far the most common model railway scale in North America and in most parts of the world. In Canada and the United States, the range of products available in HO scale is almost unlimited

It's also popular enough that products are reasonably priced and packed with details and operating features in many cases that might include working headlights, number boards and ditch lights on locomotives, to detailed interiors for passengers cars.

In HO scale, it's also relatively easy to make scenes come alive by adding building details and interiors, lights and people.

Using a four foot by eight foot sheet of plywood, you can plan layouts beginning with a simple oval of track and carry on from there. So put on that scale planning hat and start thinking about how to get yourself on track. ◀◀



↑ Here is a shot of an HO scale GP38-2 locomotive displayed in "actual size". The unit is about two inches high.

How Long is That Train in HO Scale?



If we wanted to run a 50 car potash train on our layout, how much track would you need? Or conversely, if you had an oval of track, how many cars could you run on your layout without the front meeting the end of the train?

In real life, a potash car such as the one above is 47 feet long (6.64 inches in HO scale). A 50 car train with two ES44AC locomotives would total approximately 2,500 feet in length. That equates to just under 28.75 feet in HO scale.

On oval of track with a 22 inch radius curve and two nine inch straight rails on each side, you would only have about 14.5 feet of track. Your train could not be longer than about 20 cars without chasing itself.

Now imagine trying to run a prototypical 135 car train! ◀◀



The Prototype Page - Covered Hoppers 1



← MOCX 412283 is a three-bay covered hopper car used to carry potash. The car was built by TrinityRail in 2012 and is owned by the Mosaic Corporation. It shows a rated load limit of 226,400 pounds.



← PTEX 21451 is used by Canpotex to carry potash. The 4,725 cubic foot car is owned by General Electric Rail Services (PTEX). It's load limit is 227,100 pounds (103,00 kg). It is unusual for a car to carry metric ratings. Usually only Imperial units are displayed.



← SKPX 625029 is a 4,550 cubic foot, four-bay covered hopper built by Hawker Siddeley Canada for the Government of Saskatchewan to transport grain. The car has a rated load limit of 223,700 pounds. Both Imperial and metric units are shown.



← This is the North American Railcar HO scale model of the same car. Both shots were taken in Regina!



← Winchester & Western 9378 is an example of a two-bay hopper car. It has a load limit of 232,400 pounds and is often used for commodities such as cement, flour, mineral salts and so on. This car was built by American Railcar Industries (ARI).

Covered hoppers are used to transport a wide variety of bulk materials such as grain, potash, cement, plastic pellets and so on. They are widely found throughout western Canada, often in "unit trains".

Covered hoppers can vary in length and most often use gravity as a means to both fill and empty loads.

The cars are used when loads need to be protected from external contaminants such as dust and water or in the case of grain cars, birds!

Commodities hauled in covered hoppers include potash, grain, mineral salts (such as sodium chlorate), cement, plastic pellets, sand, flour, legumes (such as lentils), fertilizer, sugar and so on.

The cars generally carry about the same load limit (in the range of 220,000 pounds to 230,000 pounds) regardless of the car length. This is more a function of weight limits imposed by the track as opposed to car capacity.

Major car builders include National Steel Car, Trinity Industries, American Railcar Industries, and Greenbrier (Gunderson).

In Canada, you will find hopper cars owned by railways (those carrying reporting marks such as CN, CNA, CP, CAAA, WW, etc.), and those owned by third parties - private companies or leasing companies. All reporting marks for these cars end with the letter "X" - as with the "MOCX", "PTEX" and "SKPX" cars shown on the left.

Cars used in grain and potash service are often found in "unit trains" - all cars are carrying the same commodity and trains may be 100 or more cars in length. Covered hoppers carrying products such as salt, cement or plastic pellets can generally be found as cars on manifest trains. ◀◀

The Prototype Page column is designed to provide you with a look at real railroading so you can operate a better model layout.



Looking For More On Model Railroading?

The RRMA is not out to re-invent the wheel when it comes to model railroading. There are a huge number of organizations and clubs in North America.

Leading the way is the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) and its Canadian entity the National Model Railway Association (NMRA Canada).

The National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) is an organization of model railroaders, advancing the worldwide scale model railroading community through education and standards as well as advocacy and fellowship.

The NMRA has produced a broad range of information and standards that are recognized by product manufacturers and are often cited in product specifications. Standards also exist for the design and construction of modules that may be used together in NMRA compliant displays.

Conventions and shows are held regularly by the NMRA and its chapters. The Pacific Northwest Chapter of the NMRA represents groups and individuals in Saskatchewan.

NMRA Canada is a non-profit educational association whose purpose is to promote and teach the art and craft of model railroading in Canada.

The Canadian Association of Railway Modellers (CARM) is both for Canadians as well as those with interests in Canadian Railways or model railroading or both.

CARM notes that it is dedicated to promoting the model railway hobby in

Canada. It publishes a quarterly newsletter known as the "Canadian".

A third group that has provided a great deal of information on-line is the Ottawa Valley HOTRAK Club. They were formed in 1996 as a spin-off from an earlier group.

Their web site includes a massive amount of information on the standards used for their modular layout, covering everything from planning, design, building and operations. It is truly an impressive set of documents.

As was noted above, it is not our intent to duplicate what already exists. We'd like to keep it simple and functional but still consider how the final product comes together and runs.

We are a new, small group and our number one objective is to have some fun with friends and fellow modellers, old and new, building the RRMA.

If you'd like to read more about the NMRA or the Ottawa valley HOTRAK Club, visit the web sites listed below. ◀◀

National Model Railroad Association (U.S.)

www.nmra.org

National Model Railway Association (Canada)

nmracanada.ca

Canadian Association of Railway Modellers

caorm.org

Ottawa Valley HOTRAK Club

www.hotrak.ca

Shopping for The Hobby

We believe in supporting local businesses whenever possible. In southern Saskatchewan that means that your choices are unfortunately somewhat limited.

In Regina, stop by **Redline Hobby** located at 308 McDonald Street in the northeast end of the city (redlinehobby.ca). Henry and his team at Redline carry a full range of hobby products including model railways. Just in case you didn't know, Redline will place special orders from its distributors for product not in stock, at no extra cost.

There are a number of choices available to shop on the Internet as well. One of the largest model train vendors is **Pacific Western Rail Systems** (pwrs.ca). They also have a number of exclusive product lines such as the green Saskatchewan grain cars and Canpotex potash cars.

You can also visit model train shows such as the annual show held in Moose Jaw at the Western Development Museum or the Super Train show held in Calgary every April. Vendors and others are always on hand with a wide variety of new and secondhand products.

With a keen eye and some careful planning you can find a lot of great buys out there. Today's products have become much more highly detailed and sophisticated but technology often means you can get more miles for your dollar! ◀◀

REGINA RAILWAY MODELLERS ASSOCIATION



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